

Remarks/Arguments

New claims 16-18 have been added to further define the present invention. Claims 1-15 have been cancelled.

The Office Action states that as to the claim containing an anti-obturation feature, Leason has a means for minimizing the obturation of the filter element citing elements 156 and 174 or grid plate 113, 121, 124 as example of these means when the device is operated in a "**reverse flow mode**" such that the outlet becomes the inlet and the inlet becomes the outlet. The cited elements are specifically delineated as being **support plates or grids** for the filter and are specifically designed to be located below the filter so that the filter is not distorted or broken by the flow of fluid that impinges upon it during use.


There is no teaching that Applicant can find in the reference to a "reverse flow mode" as suggested by the Office Action. In fact the reference **clearly and specifically** teaches the opposite, that as the filter "may be quite delicate, it is desirable to provide support to this element on the downstream or low pressure side." (Column 2, lines 22-24) also see Column 4, line 45 in which the ribs on the downstream side of the filter "act as a support for the filter element 12."; Column 6, lines 22-26, "the support grid 113 is disposed within the downstream part 116 of housing 114 in supportive communication with the downstream side of the filter element 112."; Column 6, lines 54-56, "an insert plate 134 is also utilized in supportive communication with the filter media 132...."; Column 7, lines 29-30, "The support grid 156 is constructed and disposed within the outlet part 162...."; Column 7, lines 58-59, "Filter support grid 61 is similar in function and structure to grid 113...." .

This is a clear teaching away from the concept of a "reverse flow mode" as suggested by the Office action as the filter would then be unsupported and would be subject to damage and failure, rendering the filtration step void and necessitating a new filtration step done in the correct manner or in the worst case, allowing bacteria to enter a patient, which the step is trying to avoid. As such, the rejection based upon the reverse flow mode and the downstream support elements thereby functioning to prevent obturation is unfounded and unsupported by the teachings of the reference, is clearly taught away from by the teachings of the reference and it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 14 and 15 have been objected to as depending from a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten to include the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 16 includes the limitations of claim 14 and claim 8 from which it depends, claim 17 includes the limitations of claim 15 and claim 8 from which it depends. It is believed that claims 16 and 17 are in condition for allowance.

Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendment and remarks.

Respectfully submitted,



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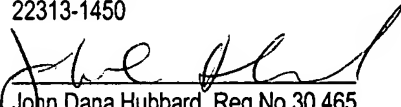
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